

(This narrative contains my recollections of scattered incidents and)  
*by Rev. FRANCIS CLOHERTY*

The following is an attempt to record some scattered, impressions and incidents of my ten and one half years as associate Pastor at Holy Family Parish, Duxbury. If I were to spend more time and hunt through my files and talk to some people who (used to) still live in Duxbury or who have since moved I am sure that my historical accuracy and memory could be improved upon. However I have not done this because of considerations of time. My offering here will be scattered but hopefully orderly enough to (be of some) not cause undue distraction and frustration to the reader, while at the same time informing his. Finally many who have been subjected to my attempts at preaching the Gospel (will find it has not believe me) will perhaps think it inconceivable and/or impossible for me to be brief...when I have finished this paper I hope to show by my length that brevity is not only a possibility for me but at least after the actuality ...conceivable.

In 1962 the Southeast Expressway reached Duxbury. When I (arrived in) was assigned by Cardinal Cushing to Holy Family Parish in 1965 the population of the town was about 5000-7000. (20%) 15 % of the High school graduating class were Roman Catholic; 20% of the town was Roman Catholic. From the first Protestant population was very open and receptive to me and (largely) I attribute this to the lasting and positive impression made on the town by the first Pastor of Holy Family Parish, Fr. John Manion (1945-1950), the true ecumenical spirit of the Rev. Richard S. Hasty (1st Parish Church) Rev. David Sugenthaler (St. John's Episcopal Church), the Rev. Stephen Turrell of Pilgrim Church as well as impact of Pope John XXIII and the 2<sup>nd</sup> Vatican Council.

The Roman Catholic population in Duxbury (on the other had had not experienced) did not have a tradition of closeness to its clergy. One incident that happened about 4 months after I arrived really symbolized for me where the people were in this respect. It was May or June of 1965 and a new president had been elected by the parish youth group (CYO). He and I sat down for a few hours one afternoon to discuss the future of the youth group. As I showed him to the door and as he was going out he suddenly turned around and asked me...."Is it proper to shake the hand of a priest?"

It became clear to me very early that the first priority for me in parish ministry was going to be adult, especially parent, education. Discussion groups, lectures and many hours of preparation from my sermons become a major effort from the beginning. Early in my time there, the fall 1966 or 1967, we instituted evenings of instruction for parents whose children were to receive First Eucharist. (The need for reorg. Bringing up to "the church up to date").. Pope John asked us bring the church up to date and the need for this was made very clear to me one evening at a session for parents of children preparing to receive the Eucharist. I had made a simple statement to the effect that.....that since 75% of the population of the world is not baptized and will in all likelihood not be baptized before death and since God is all loving and wishes us all to be saved it should be obvious that the fundamental reason to baptize someone was not to save them...the primary effect of baptism was to bring one into the Church of Christ.

One become a member of the church to be in it and with it in the work of saving the world and certainly one was saved in and that work but the purpose of baptism per se was not in the first instance salvation.

One man in the audience, a Boston College graduate of the early 1950s...was so upset that stood up and challenged me...Whose theology are you preaching, the church's or Father Cloherty's? (That kind of reaction was characteristic of what those who had undergone a theological received a Catholic religious school education. I found this my impression.) I would be willing to admit (or confess if you will) that my approach in pulpit, lecture discussion was not always helpful to my listeners and even that at times I took evil delight in puncturing the parochial bubbles of those around me with insufficient concern for their feelings, insecurities, etc. Then too my own attempts to adjust to an ecumenical environment, my attempts to come to grips with the issue of racism, open housing, poverty, welfare rights and the Vietnam War, Humane Vitae etc.etc. with little support or encouragement from the Church authorities at times had me offering undigested, insufficiently reflected upon material. But I would have to say that during my time in Duxbury, I found Catholic college graduates of the 40s and early fifties least helpful, closed and rigid. They gave me the greatest hassles(?) and from point of view...uncalled for. And coming as I was from constant adjustment, ministering in a decade where all value and authority systems were being questioned I had many rocky and often painful encounters with the graduates of our Catholic educational system.

My fondest memories and deepest friendships during my Duxbury years was with Dick Hasty, the minister of the 1st Parish Church. His integrity, honesty and intellectual acumen as well as his sense of humor were superior. In 1966, we took a bus ride to Washington D.C. and back to protest the immorality and unjust war being waged by the government in Vietnam. I remember coming back through the night...neither of us able to sleep. We discussed the Christian notion of original sin. In the exchange he was able to hear the heart of the Church's tradition....that there is a wider human sinfulness which has its roots in the past which afflicts the unborn, infant and adults today; I was able to hear and accept his Unitarian critique that some of what we took to be sinfulness or punishment for sin was just the human situation in its present state of evolution. By the time we reached Boston, we were in complete agreement. This honest, no holds barred open exchange was and is the heart of my friendship with Dick.

For me one of the great gifts I experienced in Duxbury was being ministered to by the other clergy esp. at the time of my mothers death. I also had the privilege as a RC clergyman to minister to them and their families; I might mention in passing the serious illness of David Sugenthaler, the death of Johnathan Turrell, and the problems experienced by Lew Mills (David's successor) after his first Baccalaureate address at Duxbury High School. These and other incidents made me feel part of a brotherhood where I experienced my personhood and my ministry validated as never before and where the ordained ministry of a Church wider than the RC tradition was there to take care of me.

The Duxbury Council of Churches will always be part of me.....our common commitment to prayer, to share our building, classrooms so that no new

buildings would be needed. For years when I was there and even now meetings of various group from Holy Family parish might be at our own hall (Manion Hall) or they might equally be at St. John, Pilgrim or 1<sup>st</sup> Parish Church or vice versa.

On the social issues we did not always make it together i.e. housing for low income people and the Vietnam War but the Council of Churches has had real aggressive concern for the poor of the town of Duxbury and its environs. Through its Christian Service Committee (which committee originated at Holy Family Parish). Another ecumenical effort through the Council which was most significant was the Foster Care Program and the Big Sister-Big Brother program. The numbers of children abused or neglected in that town.....more often from affluent families....was very disconcerting. In 1969, Mr. Frank Gagleardi(?), a school adjustment counselor for the Duxbury schools and a committee from the Council (of which committee I was a member) put together a program which has given many of us many fond memories as we reached out to depressed parents, hurting children and homes battle scarred by the various pressures of a success oriented affluent suburban town.

By the time I left Duxbury (1975) the town had grown in population to 11,000. The majority of those who had moved into town in the ten years previous were Roman Catholics...the Catholic population of the 2<sup>nd</sup> grade was 50%. The pressure for housing escalated as time went on....it was estimated that there was less than a 2% vacancy rate for housing in Plymouth County in 1973. The people who suffered most during this time were as might be expected the poor, elderly and especially families. In 1966, I had become a member of the board of directors of the South Shore Community Action Council... a poverty program agency which served a twelve town region from Scituate and Hull to south to Plymouth and Carver. It had become quite clear to me early on that youth and the poor esp. women on Aid to Dependent Children could never get the appropriate assistance from agencies, such as the Town Dept of Public Health, the welfare office while it was part of the town structure (when the state took over and the director was in Marshfield there was a distinct improvement under the directorship of Edna Holmes), the Police department, the local district Court, some medical doctors and lawyers, etc.

Through the SSCAC I found an outlet through which I could respond to the call of Mater et Magistra of Pope XXIII the Decree on the Church in the modern world of the II Vatican Council and most especially Pope Paul VI's letter *Progressio Popularum*. The Legal Service Committee of over 50 lawyers in private practice, the South Shore Housing Development Corporation, the Head Start Program, the Welfare Rights Counselling etc. all were part of the fabric of my ten years in Duxbury and I felt were fully in line with where a clergyman in the Roman tradition should be in the late 60s and early 70's.

In retrospect the areas which I feel that I have made a clear contribution to the parish life of Holy Family Parish as a member first and then as a leader in orders are 1) enabling the lay people of that parish to own their baptism, their power and right to be the Church...to work with others....clergy and laity to give the Church direction. 2) that parish is irrevocably ecumenical because of what we all did together 3) that parish will always have people committed to the poor.

These in my opinion are the big areas of emphasis in my 10+ years. Other areas of activity could be mentioned...eg religious education of children, open housing campaigns, examining racial attitudes and life styles but the three above are key. It should be noted that prayer liturgy are absent from the above. The liturgy and its updating were out of my hands and I was very early told that this caused me great distress at first but as I moved into the areas of work and ministry above I accepted what I felt I could not change. Prayer was not a key thing with me at that time...It has since become central...but that is just where I was at....the work of someone else to come after me. I don't want to give the impression that I did not pray but it was not central.

This narrative contains my recollections of  
~~the~~ scattered incidents and

The following is an attempt to record some  
scattered, impressions <sup>and</sup> incidents of my ten and  
one half years as associate pastor at Holy Family  
Parish, Duplury. If I were to spend more time and  
hunt through my files and talk to some people  
who ~~used to~~ still live in Duplury or who have  
since moved I am sure that my historical  
accuracy and memory could be improved upon.  
However I ~~do~~ have not ~~done~~ done this because  
of considerations of time. My offering here  
will be scattered but hopefully orderly enough  
to ~~be of some~~ not cause undue distraction and  
frustration to the reader <sup>while at the same time, informing him</sup>. Usually many who have  
been subjected to my attempts at preaching the  
Gospel ~~will find it too not believe me~~ will  
perhaps think it inconceivable and/or impossible  
for me to be brief - when I have finished this  
paper I hope to show by my length that  
brevity is not only <sup>a</sup> possibility for me but at least  
after the actuality - conceivable.

1962

In 1962 the Southeast Expressway reached  
Daphney ~~By 1965~~ When I arrived ~~in~~ was  
assigned by Cardinal Cushing to Holy Family Parish  
in 1965 the population <sup>of the town</sup> was about 5000-7000. ~~217~~  
15% of the Highschool graduating Class were Roman  
Catholic; <sup>20% of the town was</sup> ~~The town was~~ Roman Catholics. <sup>from the first</sup> ~~The~~  
Protestant population was very open and receptive  
to me. I largely attribute this to the <sup>lasting and positive</sup> impression  
made on the town by the first Pastor of Holy  
Family Parish, Fr. John Manion (~~1944~~ ~~1945~~ 1945-50),  
and the true ecumenical spirit of the Rev Richard  
D. Hasty (1st Parish Church) <sup>(United Methodist Church)</sup> Rev David Sargentholer (St  
John's Episcopal Church) and The Rev Stephen Turrell  
of Pilgrim Church. as well as <sup>the impact of Pope John XXIII +</sup> ~~the 2nd Vatican Council~~

The Roman Catholic Population, ~~on the other~~  
~~hand~~ ~~had not experienced~~ did not have the a  
tradition of closeness to ~~priests~~ its clergy. I arrived  
One incident that happened about 4 months <sup>after</sup> really  
symbolized for me where the people were  
at in this respect. It was May or June of 1965  
and a new president had been elected ~~for it~~ by  
the parish youth group (CYO). <sup>He and I</sup> ~~The~~ sat down  
for a few hours one afternoon to discuss  
the future ~~spec~~ of the youth group. ~~As he~~ <sup>He</sup>  
As I showed him to the door and as he  
was going out he suddenly turned around and  
asked me - "Is it proper to shake the ~~hand~~

hand of a priest?"

It became clear to me very early that the first priority for me in parish ~~work~~ ministry was going to be adult, especially parent, education. Discussion groups, lectures and many hours of preparation for <sup>my</sup> sermons became <sup>early</sup> a major effort. <sup>from the beginning</sup> Early in my time there, <sup>the fall 1966/67</sup> we instituted evenings of instruction for parents whose children were to receive ~~First~~ Eucharist. The need for ~~bringing up~~ "the Church up to date" Pope John asked ~~for~~ us bring the Church up to date and the need for this was made very clear to me one evening at a session for parents of ~~old~~ children preparing to receive the Eucharist. I had made ~~the~~ <sup>a</sup> simple statement to the effect that - ~~B~~ that since 75% of the population of the world is not baptized and will ~~not~~ be in all likelihood not be baptized before death and since God is all loving and wishes us all to be saved it should be obvious that the fundamental reason for baptizing someone was ~~not~~ death was not to save them ~~but something~~ but to - the <sup>primary</sup> ~~reason~~ <sup>effect of baptism</sup> was to bring one ~~thru~~ into the Church of Christ. <sup>One became a member of</sup> ~~Since~~ <sup>in X't and w/ X't in the way of saving the world</sup> and certainly one ~~to be~~ <sup>One man in the audience a</sup> ~~BC~~ Boston College graduate of the early 1950's - was so up-set that stood up and challenged me - <sup>person</sup> ~~person~~ was not in the 1st instance salvation.

the church was saved in + that work - but the purpose of baptism

— Whose theology are you preaching the Church's  
on Father Chastity? ~~That kind of reaction~~  
~~was characteristic of what those who had~~  
~~undergone a theological received a~~  
~~Ch Catholic religious school education.~~  
~~I found this~~ ~~my impression is~~ I would  
be willing to admit (or confess if you will)  
that my approach in pulpit, lecture ~~was~~ discussed  
was not always helpful to my listeners and  
even that at times I took evil delight in  
puncturing ~~balloons~~ the ~~to~~ parochial ~~bubble~~  
bubbles of those around me ~~without~~ <sup>with insufficient</sup>  
~~little~~ concern for their feelings, insecurities  
etc. ~~But~~ <sup>Then too</sup> ~~My~~ <sup>own</sup> attempts to adjust to an  
ecumenical environment, my attempt to  
come to grips with the issue of racism, open  
housing, poverty, <sup>welfare Rights</sup> and the Vietnam War, Humanae  
Vitae etc etc with little support or encouragement  
from the Church authorities ~~may~~ <sup>at times</sup> ~~had~~ had me  
offering ~~for~~ <sup>my time and suffering</sup> ~~was~~ undigested, insufficiently reflected  
upon material. But I would have to say ~~the~~ <sup>I found</sup>  
~~most~~ ~~abuse~~, unhelpful people were ~~that~~ <sup>the</sup> Catholic  
college graduates of the 40's and early <sup>fifties</sup>  
least helpful, ~~no~~ <sup>They gave me the greatest</sup> closed and rigid. ~~And~~ <sup>uncall.</sup> ~~was~~ <sup>and from point of</sup>  
And coming as I was from constant adjustment, <sup>for</sup>  
~~and~~ ministering in a decade where <sup>all</sup> value and  
authority systems were being questioned

that during



and often painful

I had many, many rocky encounters with the graduates of our Catholic educational system

~~One of~~ My fondest memories and deepest friendships during my Duffbury years was with Dick Hasty. <sup>the minority of the 1st Boston Church</sup> His integrity, honesty and intellectual acumen ~~was~~ ~~was~~ ~~as~~ as well as his sense of humor were superior. In 1966 we ~~came~~ <sup>+ back to protest</sup> to took a bus ride to Washington DC ~~sponsored~~ <sup>and protests were being waged by the government in Vietnam.</sup> by Clergy and ~~laity~~ <sup>concerned</sup> about Vietnam. I remember ~~driving~~ <sup>coming</sup> back through the night - neither of us able to sleep. We discussed the Christian notion of original sin. He ~~was~~ able to hear in the exchange he was able to hear the heart of the Church's tradition - that there is a wider human sinfulness which ~~has~~ <sup>has</sup> its roots in the past which afflicts the unborn, infants and adults today; I was able to hear and accept his Unitarian Critique that some of what we took to be sinfulness or punishment ~~of~~ for sin was just the human situation in its present state of evolution. By the time we reached Boston we were in complete agreement. This honest, no holds ~~for~~ barred open exchange was and is the heart of my friendship with Dick.

~~One of the characteristics of the relationships~~  
~~that I and other <sup>one</sup> ~~had with the clergy~~ as members~~  
~~of the clergy of Duxbury was that~~

~~One A great gift of the Duxbury~~

For me one of the great gifts ~~of~~ I experienced,  
in Duxbury was being ministered to by  
the other clergy <sup>esp.</sup> at the time of my mother's death  
I also ~~had the privilege of~~ <sup>as a RC clergyman</sup> ~~and being able~~ <sup>feeling free to</sup> ~~be~~ minister to  
them and their families; I might mention in  
passing the serious illness of David Serpethaler  
the death of Johnathan Turrell, and the problems  
experienced by Lew Mills (David's successor)  
after his <sup>1st</sup> Baccalaureate Address ~~in~~ <sup>his first year</sup> ~~in Duxbury~~  
in Duxbury. These and other incidents  
made me feel part of a brotherhood where  
I experienced my personhood and my  
ministry validated as never before and where  
the ordained ministry of a Church under than  
the RC ~~for~~ tradition was there to take care of  
me. +

at DHS.

The Duxbury Council of Churches will always  
be part of my me - ~~Wendell Orlett from the 1st~~  
~~Baptist Church~~, Our common commitment  
to prayer - ~~not to act~~ to share our ~~physical~~  
~~plants~~ buildings, classrooms so as to ~~act~~

that no new buildings would be needed. For years ~~and even now~~ when I was there and even now ~~Meeting~~ meeting of various group from Holy Family parish might be at our own hall (Mahon Hall) or they might ~~just as~~ ~~as~~ equally be at St John, Pilgrim or 1st Parish Church or vice versa.

On the social issues we did not always make it together i.e. housing for low income people and the Vietnam War but the Council of Churches has had ~~and~~ a ~~small~~ real aggressive concern for the poor of the town ~~and~~ of Duxbury and its environs. This through its Christian Service Committee (which committee originated at Holy Family Parish). Another eccumenical effort through the Council which was most significant was the ~~the~~ Foster Care Program and the Big Sister - Big Brother program. The numbers of children abused or neglected in that town - more often from affluent families - was very disconcerting. <sup>In 1969</sup> Mr Frank Cogliardi, ~~then~~ ~~of~~ a ~~in 1969~~ a school adjustment Counsellor for the Duxbury schools and a committee from the Council (of which committee I was a member) put together a program which <sup>given</sup> ~~given~~ many children of us ~~so~~ many fond memories

has

as we reached out to depressed parents,  
hunting children and homes battle scarred  
by the various pressures of a success  
oriented affluent suburban town

By the time I left Durbury <sup>1975</sup> the town  
had grown in population to 11,000. The majority  
of those who had moved into town in the ten  
years previous were Roman Catholics - the  
Catholic population of the 2nd grade was 50%.  
The pressure ~~of~~ for housing escalated as time  
went on - it was estimated that there was less  
than a 2% vacancy rate for housing in  
Plymouth County in 1973. The people who  
suffered most during this time were as might  
be expected the poor, elderly and especially  
families. In 1966 I had become a member  
of the board of directors of the South Shore  
Community Action Council - a poverty program  
agency which served a twelve town  
region from Scituate to Hull & south  
to Plymouth and Carver. ~~It~~ It had  
become quite clear to me early on  
that <sup>young families</sup> ~~the~~ poor esp women on ~~shore~~ did to  
Dependent Children ~~that~~ could ~~not~~  
never get the appropriate assistance from

agencies, such as the Town Dept of Public Health, the welfare office while it was part of the town structure (when the state took over and the director was in Marshfield there was a distinct improvement under the directorship of Edna Holmes), the Police department the local district Court, the some medical doctors and lawyers etc.

Through the SSCAC I found an outlet ~~for~~ through which I could respond to the call of Mater et Magistra of Pope XXIII the Decree ~~of the~~ on the Church in the Modern World of the II Vatican Council and most especially Pope Paul VI's letter Progressio Popularum. The legal services committee of over 50 ~~of~~ lawyers in private practice practice, the <sup>Sally Shore</sup> Housing Development Corporation, the Head Start Program, the Welfare Rights Counseling etc. all were part of the fabric of my ten years in Duxbury and I felt aware fully in line with where a clergyman in the Roman Tradition should be in the late 60's and early 70's.

In retrospect ~~my area~~ the areas which I ~~felt~~ feel that I have made a clear contribution to the parish life of Holy Family Parish as a member first and then as a leader in Orders are 1) enabling the laypeople of that parish to own their baptism, their ~~responsibilities~~ power and right to be the Church - to work with others - clergy + laity to give the Church direction

2) that parish is irrevocably ecumenical because of what we all did together

3) that parish will always have people committed to the poor

These in my opinion are the key areas of emphasis in my 10<sup>+</sup> yrs. Other areas of activity could be mentioned - eg religious education of children, open housing campaigns, ~~etc but these were~~ examining racial attitudes and life styles but the three above are key

It should be noted that prayer liturgy are absent from ~~any of~~ the above. This. The liturgy and its updating were out of my hands and I was ~~very~~ early told that

this caused me great distress at first but  
as I moved into the areas of work and  
ministry alone I accepted what I  
felt I could not change. Prayer  
was not a key thing with me at that  
time - It has ~~seem~~ since become  
central - but that is just where I  
was at - the work of someone else to  
come after me. I don't want to give  
the impression that I did not pray  
but it was not central.